Charlesworth 73

"The mighty dead
"Who blessed mankind and humanised the world."

THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN
AND
Record of Unitarian Worthies

BEING A HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN REFORMATION OF RELIGION IN EUROPE AND AMERICA DURING THE LAST THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS.

With some Account of the most Notable Works written by Unitarians.

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A VISIT WITH THE DOCTOR.

"How are you to-day, Mrs. Carleton?" asked Dr. Farleigh, as he sat down by his patient, who reclined languidly in a large cushioned chair.

"Miserable," was the faint-spoken reply. And the word was repeated—"Miserable."

"Have you taken the tonic for which I left a prescription yesterday?"

"Yes, but I'm no stronger."

"Have you taken the morning walk in the garden that I suggested?"

"O dear no! Walk in the garden? I am faint by the time I get to the breakfast room! I can't live at this rate, Doctor. What am I to do? I'm a burden to myself and everyone else."

"You must have the fresh air, Mrs. Carleton," said the doctor, emphatically. "Fresh air, change of scene, and exercise are indispensable in your case. You will die if you remain shut up after this fashion. Come, take a ride with me."

"Doctor! how absurd!" exclaimed Mrs. Carleton, almost shocked by the suggestion. "Ride with you! What would people think?"

"A fig for people's thoughts! Get your shawl and bonnet and take a drive with me. What do you care for meddlesome people's thoughts? Come."

The doctor knew his patient. He said, "You fashionable people are all afraid of each other. You haven't a spark of individuality or independence. No, not a spark! You are quite strong enough to ride out in your own elegant carriage—but with the doctor—O dear, no! If you were certain of not meeting Mrs. Macflimsey, perhaps the experiment might be adventured. But she is always out on fine days."

"Doctor, for shame! How can you say that?" * * * *

Away from the noisy streets, out upon the smoothly beaten road, and amid green fields and woodlands, gardens and flower decked orchards, the doctor bore his patient, holding her all the while in pleasant talk.

Returning to the city by a different road, the doctor, after driving through streets entirely unfamiliar to his companion, drew up before a row of mean-looking dwellings, and dropping the reins, stepped upon the pavement, at the same time reaching out his hand to Mrs. Carleton. But she drew back, saying:

"What is the meaning of this, doctor?"

"I have a patient here, and I want you to see her."

"Oh no; excuse me, doctor, I've no taste for such things," answered the lady.

"Come—I can't leave you alone in the carriage. Ned might take a fancy to walk off with you. He likes to go home, like others of his tribe. Come;" and the doctor held out his hand in a most persistent manner.

Mrs. Carleton looked at the poor tenements before which the doctor's carriage had stopped with something of disgust and something of apprehension.

"I can never go in there, doctor."

"Why not?"

"I might take some disease."

"Never fear. More likely to find a panacea there."

Mrs. Carleton left the carriage, and crossing the pavement, entered one of the houses and passed up with the doctor to the second storey. To his light tap at a chamber door, a woman's voice said:

"Come in."

The door was pushed open, and the doctor and Mrs. Carleton went in. The room was small, and furnished in the humblest manner, but the air was pure, and everything looked clean and tidy. In a chair,

This Outside Cover to be taken Off by the Binder of the "Record."

with a pillow pressed back for a support, sat a pale, emaciated woman, whose large, bright eyes looked up eagerly at so unexpected a visitor as the lady who came with the doctor. On her lap a baby was sleeping, as sweet and pure and beautiful a baby as ever Mrs. Carleton had looked upon. The first impulse of her true woman's heart, had she yielded to it, would have prompted her to take it in her arms and cover it with kisses.

The woman was too weak to rise from her chair, but she asked Mrs. Carleton to be seated, in a tone of lady-like self-possession that did not escape the visitor's observation.

"How did you pass the night, Mrs. Leslie?" asked the doctor.

"About as usual," she answered, in a calm, patient way, and she even smiled as she spoke.

"How about the pain through your back and shoulder?"

"It may have been a little easier."

"You slept?"

"Yes, sir."

"What of the night-sweats?"

"I don't think they have diminished any."

The doctor bent his eyes on the floor and sat in silence for some time.

"I will send you a new medicine," said the doctor, looking up; then speaking to Mrs. Carleton, he added, "Will you sit here until I visit two or three patients in the block?"

"O, certainly," and she reached out her arms for the baby, and removed it so gently from its mother's lap that its soft slumbers were not broken.

When the doctor returned he noticed there had been tears in Mrs. Carleton's eyes. She was still holding the baby, but now resigned the quiet sleeper to its mother, kissing it as she did so. He saw her look with a tender, meaning interest at the white, patient face of the sick woman, and heard her say, as she spoke a word or two in parting,

"I shall not forget you."

"That's a sad case, doctor," remarked the young lady, as she took her place in the carriage.

"It is; but she is sweet and patient."

"I saw that, and it filled me with surprise. She tells me her husband died a year ago."

"Yes."

"And she has supported herself by shirt-making."

"Yes."

Mrs. Carleton was silent for most of the way home; but thought was busy. She had seen a phase of life that touched her heart.

"You are better for this ride," remarked the doctor, as he handed her from the carriage.

"I think so," replied Mrs. Carleton.

"There has not been so fine a colour on your face for months."

They had entered Mrs. Carleton's elegant residence, and were sitting in one of her luxurious parlours.

"Shall I tell you why?" added the doctor.

Mrs. Carleton bowed.

"You have had some healthy heart-beats."

She did not answer.

"And I pray you, dear madam, let the strokes go on!" continued Dr. Farleigh, "Let your mind become interested in some good work, and your hands obey your thoughts, and you will be a healthier woman in body and soul. Your disease, madam, is mental inaction."

Mrs. Carleton looked steadily at the doctor.

"You are in earnest?" she said, in a calm, firm way.

"Wholly in earnest, madam. I found you an hour ago in so weak a state that to lift your hand was an exhaustive effort. You are sitting erect now, with every muscle tightly strung. When will your carriage come home?"

He asked the closing question abruptly.

"To-morrow," was the reply.

"Then I will not call for you, but—" He hesitated.

"Say on, doctor."

"Will you take my prescription?"

"Yes." There was no hesitation.

"You must give that sick woman a ride into the country. The fresh, pure, blossom-sweet air, will do her good, may, indeed, turn the balance of health in her favour."

"That drive into the country is already a settled thing. Do you know that I am in love with that baby?"

"Othello's occupation's gone, I see!" replied the doctor, rising. "But I may visit you occasionally as a friend, I presume, if not as a medical adviser?"

"As my best friend, always," said Mrs. Carleton, with feeling. "You have led me out of myself, and showed me the way to health and happiness; and I have settled the question as to my future. It shall not be as the past." And it was not.

T. S. ARTHUR.

IMMORAL THEOLOGY.

THE crucial test of all theologies is the definition of God. A man may be better than his creed, but his creed can be neither better nor worse than the God he believes in.

A theology in which God is merely the added result of physical science, or the sum of universal force, or the unconscious "stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being," will not, of course, if it be self-consistent, have much to say about right or wrong, duty or desert, praise or blame. If God be only a stream of tendency, men can be nothing more than bubbles on the stream—a moment reflecting the light that shines upon them, then gone for ever.

They who teach that God is unconscious and impersonal, that He has neither thought nor feeling, can hardly encourage their neighbours in profound thought or deep feelings concerning things unseen. If man is only an infinitesimal cog in the universal mill, his conduct must be a predetermined result, his devotion is only one phase of digestion, his worship is a glandular affection, his conscience is but the weathercock which shows which way the winds of destiny are blowing. The path which leads to the denial of the personality of God logically leads to the blotting out of everything that looks like human responsibility or personal obligation. Such a denial will inevitably reduce all those moral feelings upon which men put so much stress to mere physical phenomena, differing not one whit in their essence from the iris that glitters upon the neck of the burnished dove, or the sudden spring of the fibres that close the leaflets of the sensitive plant.

The logical result of immoral theology is immoral conduct. It is not always the actual result. Men are often better than their creeds. It is no strange thing for a man to preach one doctrine and live by another. Nevertheless, the tendency of such a view of God must be toward immorality. The general rule is that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

But, if unbelief in an immoral God be injurious, what shall we say of an immoral God? If the preaching of a God who neither thinks nor feels will lead men into sin, what must be the result of the preaching of a God who thinks evil thoughts and nourishes malignant passions? An unconscious God is better than an unjust God. To tell men that there is no God who knows them or cares for them, may blot the light out of their sky and quench the gladness of their homes, but it cannot stir such mutiny in their breasts as is awakened when they are told that God deals with them on principles of judgment which are utterly abhorrent to their nature, which contradict their fundamental ideas of morality and justice. To teach men that God is a being who has a perfect right to bring into the world a creature with faculties impaired, with no power to resist temptation, utterly unable to do right, powerless even to repent of the wrong which he is fated to do, and then send to everlasting misery this helpless creature for the sin he could not help committing—to teach such a doctrine as this about God, is to inflict upon religion a terrible injury and to subvert the very foundations of morality. To say that God may justly punish a man for the sins of his ancestors, that God does blame us for what happened long before we were born, is to blaspheme God, if there be any such thing as blasphemy. To say that any such doctrine is clearly taught in the Bible is to say that the Bible clearly teaches a monstrous lie. If there is one thing which is absolutely certain to every human being, it is that he cannot be held responsible for acts committed thousands of years ago, and that he cannot be blamed for not doing that which he is utterly without power to do.

Yet such theology as this is taught in several of our theological seminaries, and preached from many of our pulpits. It is idle to say that it is nothing but a philosophical refinement; that the men who come out of our theological seminaries with these notions in their heads never make any use of them in their pulpits. They do make use of them. They are scattering this atrocious stuff all over the land. They are making infidels faster than they are converting sinners. Men say, "If this is your God, worship him, if you want to; but do not ask us to bow down to your Moloch!" Who can blame them? For our own part, we say, with all emphasis, that between such a theology as this and atheism we should promptly choose the latter. In the name of all that is reverend in religion and all that is sacred in morality, we protest against a theology that contradicts conscience and tramples justice under foot. The infidelity of this generation is due to this more than to any other cause.

We sometimes ordain men as foreign missionaries who profess to believe this mediæval theology. Is it worth while to send to the heathen a preacher whose God is more unjust, if possible, than the gods of the heathen?—*Independent.*

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

A New Saint.—Saint Norah was a good girl, and modest. And she prayed to her saint to give her some gift that should make her useful, and not proud; so she taught her how to boil a potato. And it is a pity that the secret has descended to so few.—*Punch.*

A Communist.

What is a Communist?
One who has yearnings
For an even distribution
Of uneven earnings.

Curious Prayers.—A Scotch clergyman, who was in the habit of making his prayers too much like his sermons, is said, when one day addressing the Almighty, and quoting a sentence of the Bible, to have added, "For such, O Lord, is the best translation of this difficult passage."

Be Joyous.—Mirth is God's medicine. Everybody ought to bathe in it. Grim care, moroseness, anxiety, all this rust of life, ought to be scoured off by the oil of mirth. It is better than emery. Every man ought to rub himself with it. A man without mirth is like a wagon without springs, in which one is caused disagreeably to jolt by every pebble over which it runs.

Letting in the Light.—Herder, I believe, alludes to the pleasure he enjoyed, as a boy, when immured in the prison of his schoolroom, he bored holes with a gimlet through the wooden walls, and feasted his eyes with the prospect of the free fields without. How many in all sects are boring gimlet holes through the walls of their theological prisons, and looking out longingly upon the freedom which, thank God! we enjoy.—*Quarterly Journal.*

Channing.—An American traveller in a little village in the Austrian Tyrol met a German, who on hearing that his companion was from Boston, inquired earnestly about Channing, saying that he had felt repaid for all the difficulty of learning the English language by his delight in reading Channing's writings. A distinguished European on visiting America was once told by a lady, as lovely in character as she was exalted in rank, that she envied him his journey "on account of two things that he would see—Niagara and Channing."

The Lie of a Lifetime.—A solicitor died suddenly a few weeks ago. Few men, to all appearance, were more sincerely mourned than he was. All the newspapers in the neighbourhood published laudatory obituaries; societies passed resolutions of respect and condolence; the shops of the town were closed on the day of his funeral. He was reported to be rich, and had been, universally respected. There was apparently no doubt, nor reason for any, that the life which had just closed had been unusually honourable and prosperous. And yet the necessary investigation of his affairs revealed almost immediately that he was very far from such a man as his neighbours and friends had supposed. His whole life had been a lie, and his business transactions were based on forgery. Pretending to make investments for his clients, he had appropriated their money to his own use, and imposed sham mortgages upon them as a pretended security for their loans. He had also forged other papers, had pledged his clients' title deeds, and left his bank account overdrawn to the amount of twenty thousand pounds. Almost all his neighbours were his victims, and he left no assets. He is now supposed to have poisoned himself to avoid exposure, which could not have been far off.

A Happy Idea.—A marriage between a Christian gentleman and a Jewish lady, not long since, exercised the minds of some of their friends. "Pooh, pooh," said a gentleman, "why in the world make such a fuss about it? After all, they will only be bound together like the Old and New Testament!"

Tuition for Daughters. — The *Journal of Health* asserts that no thoughtful mother should rest till she has taught her daughters to do well the following things:—To make a cup of coffee; to draw a dish of tea; to bake a loaf of bread; to cook a potato; to broil a steak or chicken; to cut, fit, and make a dress, and set a tidy table.

Constant Instruction. — A gentleman was once riding in Scotland by a bleaching ground, where a poor woman was at work watering her webs of linen cloth. He asked her where she went to church, what she had heard on the preceding day, and how much she remembered. She could not even tell the text of the last sermon. "And what good can the preaching do you," said he, "if you forget it all?" "Ah, Sir," replied the poor woman, "if you will look at this web on the grass, you will see that as fast as ever I put the water on it the sun dries it all up, and yet, Sir, I see that it gets whiter and whiter!"

Be Like Him.—The character of God is clearly shown in the commandments He gives to men. He tells us to love our enemies. Will *He* not love His enemies? He tells the human heart that it is right to bless and do good to those who hate and curse us. Is it not safe to infer that God, the giver of these commands, will do the same? Will God do what men are expressly forbidden to do? Looking at the commandments and the parental character of God, we can only see the great love which prompted them, and behold in the bosom of the Father the desire that we should do as He does. This is the truth fundamental in the Gospel, and should be a primal thought in advancing the interests of Christ.

Kissing Hands. — There is a singular habit among the Vienna children and maidens of returning thanks for a favour or a present, which is very startling to a stranger. Your hand is immediately seized, kindly and reverently, and kissed, the only words uttered being, "I kiss your hands." If anything is given to a little beggar-girl on the street, you must submit to having your hand kissed. At the cathedral on Saturday afternoon, while the ceremony of confirmation was progressing, this was almost a momentary occurrence. It is customary for the friends and sponsors of those being confirmed to present them with ribbons, cakes, and other mementoes which are sold around the door of the cathedral. Consequently the ceremony of kissing hands was in constant progress throughout the week. The number of persons confirmed is said to have exceeded 20,000, most of them children.

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